MEMORANDUM

TO: Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission

FROM: Nathan A. Smith, W4GOP

DATE: July 29, 2016

SUBJECT: RM-11708 – Proposed Rule Change Regarding Digital Modes

Dear Commissioners:

I write today in support of RM-11708 that would eliminate the prohibitive symbol (baud) rate on digital modes. The rule that once served a purpose in the infancy of data transmission over amateur radio is no needed in today's modern age. Radio amateurs have a history in contributing to a number of technological advancements, and I believe modernizing the rules will go a long way in facilitating experimentation and furthering the art and science of amateur radio.

I have read a number of comments against this proposed rule change because of potential interference for existing modes. As one commenter who was in favor of the rule said, some of these new digital modes use a wider bandwidth for higher data transmission rates and error correction, but that shouldn't be held against the mode itself, but I believe it's something that the radio amateur community should work to ensure that the frequencies can be used by all operators who are licensed for those bands.

The radio amateur community had to adapt to data transmissions when they first came on the scene, and I believe we must continue to learn and adapt. I believe learning and adaptation is a key part to the amateur radio hobby, and I believe it's a core characteristic of the operator. It is my hope that our community, along with the American Radio Relay League, will work in order that our amateur bands are used in an efficient manner and that all operators are respectful in the operation of the mode of their choice, whether it be voice, CW, or digital.

In closing, I urge you to support this rule change and allow the art and science of amateur radio to adapt to the needs and expectations of our modern society.

Cordially,

Nathan A. Smith, W4GOP